

Special education departments end up eating large portions of local and state school budgets, which creates a competitive relationship between regular and special education, as they vie for the same scarce funds. This situation is not the fault of school districts, but a direct result of Congress's inadequate funding of IDEA.

Special education has received a billion dollar increase over the past two years. Yet even with this substantial increase, funding is still substantially below Congress's 40 percent promise. This means that states and districts will continue to be unfairly burdened by these excess costs.

Congress is simply being unfair to our local school districts by not living up to our end of this bargain and we are taking needed resources away from regular education.

I hope the Congress will live up to its obligation, and fully fund IDEA. If we do not, all students across this country will suffer.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 84 calls for increased funding for IDEA at the expense of initiatives like the Clinton/Clay Class Size Reduction Act. While I support increased funding for IDEA, we should not be robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Achieving the goal of 100,000 new teachers will ensure that every child receives personal attention, gets a solid foundation for further learning, and is prepared to read by the end of the third grade.

I am disappointed that the Republicans have continued their attempt to torpedo this critical program. On the Ed-Flex bill, Republicans tried to raid class size funds for other programs. We should never pit one program against another—we should support overall increases in education spending.

I believe that reducing class sizes with well-qualified teachers is the single most significant action we can take to enhance student achievement.

We should increase funding for IDEA, but not at the expense of class size reduction.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

IDEA ensures that all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education. Prior to IDEA, 2 million children were excluded from receiving their right to a public education. Another 2.5 million children received an inadequate education.

IDEA has served as a civil rights initiative for our Nation's children for more than 22 years.

Fully funding this educational program is important to the millions of learning disabled students in our districts across the country. It is important to our communities that benefit from the achievement level of all these students.

IDEA is another example of how government support of an educational program provides the foundation for states and local educational agencies to work together. Funding this initiative for the sake of our children is important for the future success of our schools and communities.

In addition to fully funding IDEA, Congress should also better fund other educational programs that are seriously underfunded. For example, consider Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI's).

We have charged these institutions with ensuring the academic success of the Hispanic students that are at their institutions. Similar to

IDEA, these institutions cannot fulfill their duty to the students and the community at large without adequate funding.

The funding of IDEA is critical along with the funding of all our education programs that aim to serve every child that has the right to fair, and equitable access to a quality education.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight one of the most important issues for our nation: educating our young people. Everyone agrees that a good education is critical for the future success of our children, and yet are not providing the financial resources that make this possible. This is especially true for the education of children with disabilities.

School districts are struggling with how to provide the best education possible for all children within often very tightly constrained budgets. I applaud their efforts. In many cases, however, school districts can not reduce class sizes, build needed schools, or hire new teachers while still providing the services so important to students with disabilities. In my home state of California, over 600,000 students receive special education and related services in public schools at a reported cost of \$3.4 billion. Without federal assistance, local school districts are forced to use their general funds to the detriment of other programs.

This is not to say that the IDEA hasn't been successful. It has. By providing children with disabilities with the same educational opportunities as their abled peers, we now have a system supporting happier and more productive adults. According to the Department of Education, disabled young people are three times more likely today to attend college than prior to 1975 and twice as many of today's twenty-year olds with disabilities are working. But we must do more to make sure there are more success stories than setbacks.

I applaud my friends on the other side of the aisle for bringing to the floor House Concurrent Resolution 84, which urges the Congress and the President to fully fund the federal Government's obligation under IDEA. This must be more than just words in a Resolution though. I call upon this Congress, this year, to fulfill its pledge for full funding of IDEA. It is time that the federal government make good on its obligation to the school districts and our children across the country.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 84, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 84.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

URGING CONGRESS AND PRESIDENT TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR PELL GRANTS

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 88) urging the Congress and the President to increase funding for the Pell Grant Program and existing Campus-Based Aid Programs.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 88

Whereas the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant Program, now known as the Pell Grant Program in honor of Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, was first authorized in the 1972 amendments to the Higher Education Act of 1965;

Whereas the Pell Grant Program has become the largest need-based Federal higher education scholarship program and is considered the foundation for all Federal student aid;

Whereas the purpose of the program is to assist students from low income families who would not otherwise be financially able to attend a postsecondary institution by providing grants to students to be used to pay the costs of attending the postsecondary institution of their choice;

Whereas in the late 1970's, the Pell Grant covered seventy-five percent of the average cost of attending a public four-year college; by the late 1990's, it only covered thirty-six percent of the cost of attending a public four-year college;

Whereas families across the country are concerned about the rising cost of a college education, and for children from low income families, the cost of college continues to be an overwhelming factor in their decision to forego a college education;

Whereas children from high income families are almost twice as likely to enroll in college as children from low income families;

Whereas higher education promotes economic opportunity for individuals and economic competitiveness for our Nation;

Whereas the Pell Grant and Campus-Based Aid Programs target aid to low income students as effectively as any programs administered by the Federal government; and

Whereas student borrowing to finance a postsecondary education has increased to an average indebtedness of \$9,700, and therefore increased grant aid is more important than ever: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress and the President, should, working within the constraints of the balanced budget agreement, make student scholarship aid the highest priority for higher education funding by increasing the maximum Pell Grant awarded to low income students by \$400 and increasing other existing campus-based aid programs that serve low-income students prior to authorizing or appropriating funds for any new education initiative.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON).

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.